

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 56

2 **48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2007**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Ben D. Altamirano

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE STATE PARKS DIVISION OF THE ENERGY, MINERALS AND
12 NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON
13 POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS INVOLVING MIMBRES CULTURE SITES.

14
15 WHEREAS, the Mimbres people were the most significant
16 expression of the Mogollon culture, one of the three
17 prehistoric civilizations of the American southwest; and

18 WHEREAS, the Silver City area, including the Mimbres and
19 Gila River valleys, contains numerous Mimbres sites; and

20 WHEREAS, some of the Mimbres pueblos built during the
21 classic period of that culture in the eleventh century are
22 among the largest in the southwestern United States; and

23 WHEREAS, the Mimbres people developed sophisticated canal
24 irrigation technology; and

25 WHEREAS, the Mimbres culture is epitomized by distinctive

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1 and strikingly painted black-on-white pottery that is
2 recognized as the consummation of several formal, pictorial and
3 iconographic prehistoric traditions in the American southwest;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Mimbres pottery is internationally known and is
6 among the most famous prehistoric American art styles; and

7 WHEREAS, many Mimbres sites have been vandalized or
8 destroyed and the remaining sites are threatened by further
9 vandalism and illegal pot-hunting; and

10 WHEREAS, development of interpretive and visitor education
11 programs will help protect Mimbres sites and enhance public
12 understanding and appreciation of New Mexico's cultural
13 heritage; and

14 WHEREAS, a 1989 national park service study found the
15 Mimbres culture to be of national significance, stating, "Even
16 without Mimbres black-on-white pottery, the Mimbres culture
17 would be an extraordinary development in the southwest...
18 Mimbres sites probably represent the earliest large,
19 aggregated, pueblo-like settlements in the southwest...and the
20 Mimbres employed canal irrigation apparently several centuries
21 before the Anasazi"; and

22 WHEREAS, presently, the Mimbres culture is not the focus
23 of any state or national park; and

24 WHEREAS, the Mattocks site in Mimbres valley, recognized
25 since the 1880s as one of the most significant Mimbres sites,

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1 has been acquired by the Silver City museum society for
2 development as an educational interpretive center, to be known
3 as the Mimbres culture heritage site; and

4 WHEREAS, the Mimbres culture heritage site is located
5 along the trail of the Mountain Spirits, a state and federally
6 designated scenic byway, on the route between the City of Rocks
7 state park and the Gila cliff dwellings national monument; and

8 WHEREAS, cultural tourism is known to be an important
9 contribution to New Mexico's economy; and

10 WHEREAS, development of the Mimbres culture heritage site
11 as a cultural tourism destination, interpretive site and
12 recreational and educational facility creates mutually
13 beneficial opportunities for collaboration and partnership with
14 the state parks division of the energy, minerals and natural
15 resources department;

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
17 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state parks division of the
18 energy, minerals and natural resources department be requested
19 to study the feasibility of a partnership with the Mimbres
20 culture heritage site and other Mimbres sites in developing
21 visitors' facilities and programs to educate the public about
22 the Mimbres culture; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the parks division report its
24 findings to the appropriate legislative interim committee by
25 December 1, 2007; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
2 transmitted to the secretary of energy, minerals and natural
3 resources and to the director of the state parks division.

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